



Department of Labor

Potomac Job Corps Center

CONTEXT: The **Department of Labor's Potomac Job Corps Center** provides on-the-job training in a variety of programs. Their mission is to educate and train highly motivated young people with the skills needed to become employable and independent. The existing campus was disorganized and required extensive renovations and modernizations to fit their growing program. Existing structures included several multistory brick buildings, a small recreation facility with pool, and several dormitories. **CGS Architects** was commissioned to develop a comprehensive campus Master Plan and subsequently execute the design of their initial four project phases.

SOLUTION: To bring order to the campus, **CGS Architects** created the Central Quad with a new campus-wide axial path connecting north and south program buildings. Buried below this common green space on the northern side, a field of geothermal wells smartly provide constant 55° water to its high performing mechanical systems year-round, hidden from view, but appreciably reducing the Job Corps annual operating costs. Along the south edge of the Central Quad, the Cafeteria and Recreation Center (Phase 1) includes substantial site and utility improvements. The new 17,000 SF Recreation Center houses common rooms, exercise studios, weight rooms, arts & crafts studios, a TV / movie hall, multipurpose rooms, a canteen, and full showers and lockers. The existing pool was renovated, and outdoor



Location:

Washington, DC

Scope of Work:

Master Planning, Architecture, Interior Architecture

Size:

29,000 SF (Dormitories)

30,000 SF (Cafeteria + Rec Center)

Construction Completion Date:

2009 (Dormitories)

2006 (Cafeteria + Rec Center)

playing fields and a gymnasium were added. The 18,000 SF, 350-Seat Cafeteria and Culinary Arts Building were designed with the main dining room facing the Central Quad and service to the back. These new structures provide a natural hub for students and staff alike. With thoughtfully applied glazing around the perimeter, the warm glow they emit in the evening further reinforces the welcoming nature of these facilities, encouraging gathering and fellowship, and complementing their more formal programmed uses: dining, recreation, and instruction. Subsequently, **CGS Architects** designed two new residence halls (272 beds total) located on the eastern edge of the campus. The two dorms were conceived as counterpart buildings mirroring one another while framing the Central Quad. Each building features a simple palette of materials, a soaring roof announces the entry way and common areas with sun-filled, double-height volume marking the center of activity. The signature “butterfly” metal roof collects rainwater, diverting it into common planters. These two buildings serve as an economical solution to housing a large and active community in an open, convenient, and comfortable, but also secure environment, allowing students to focus on their education and training.

